

## **I'm Gross? by orphan\_account**

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Post-Season 2. Mileven.

An unexpectedly eventful snow day...

## **I'm Gross?**

It was mid-winter in Hawkins, Indiana, the snow deep and the weather freezing. The snow was so deep that Hawkins Middle School had called for a Snow Day. As a result, the entire party had gathered at Mike's house early in the morning, planning on spending the entire day watching movies, playing outside, and at Dustin's request, drinking hot chocolate with mini marshmallows.

When Mike had called Eleven early that morning to greet her, as he did every day, Eleven was overjoyed to find out that Mike didn't have to go to school and she could spend the whole day with him and the other boys.

Hopper dropped Eleven off at the Wheeler's at 9am.

"You don't leave the Wheeler's yard, you understand me kid?"

"Understand. Not stupid," Eleven grumbled from where she stood next to Mike, clutching his hand tightly.

"I know you're not stupid, kiddo," Jim sighed, placing his hand on Eleven's shoulder. "I just want you to be safe. The Snow Ball was a risk, we just need to be extra careful for a bit, that's all."

Eleven nodded as Dustin joined the conversation, emerging from the Wheelers' basement.

"Don't worry, Hop! We'll take care of her, won't we Mike!"

Mike shot Dustin a look before rolling his eyes.

"We'll be very careful, Chief Hopper," Mike confirmed.

Jim clear his throat and nodded. "I'll be back to pick you up when I'm done work at 7 o'clock. Love you, kid."

Eleven released Mike's hand to hug her surrogate father before he left.

Once the door was closed, Dustin clapped his hands together. "So,

let's get into some trouble!"

Mike rolled his eyes again at his friend before turning and leading Eleven down the stairs to the basement.

Rather than going straight for the Star Wars trilogy, as they usually did, the group decided to watch E.T. while they ate the feast of Eggos, toast, and eggs that Mrs. Wheeler had prepared for them.

Once she was done eating Eleven, feeling tired and sore, climbed under the throw blanket Mike had settled himself under, resting her head on his shoulder as he wrapped his arm around her.

"Hey, you tired?" Mike whispered into her hair, resting his chin atop her head.

Eleven nodded her head, closing her eyes and holding her stomach as she grimaced.

"What's wrong, El?"

"Hurts," was the whispered response Eleven gave as she continued to hold her cramping stomach.

"You probably just ate breakfast too quickly," Lucas suggested from his spot between Max and Dustin.

"Yeah, you ate like 12 Eggos, Eleven!"

"Shut up, Dustin," Mike glared as El whimpered and buried her face in Mike's neck.

"What? It was awesome!"

Everyone ignored Dustin and went back to the movie as Mike rubbed Eleven's back whispering what he thought were soothing words to her. As it turned out, Mike had done the right thing and Eleven had quickly fallen asleep in Mike's lap.

Within an hour the movie finished and the boys and Max all decided they wanted to play a card game. Mike opted out, remaining buried under Eleven and a couple of blankets, her soft breathing tickling his

neck.

By noon the group was getting restless and their increasing noise level woke Eleven up.

“Mike?” She whined, disoriented and still tired.

“Hey,” he smiled, brushing through her curls that now stood up at odd angles. “Are you feeling any better?”

Eleven shook her head no but stood up nonetheless when the Lucas and Will started complaining about wanting to go outside because the basement smelt like Dustin’s farts.

“Oh, God!” Dustin exclaimed pointing at Eleven.

“What?!” Mike barked, jumping up and inspecting Eleven for any signs of injury. Eleven gave Dustin a confused look.

“Oh, no,” Max whispered, running over to Eleven and standing between her and the boys sitting around the D&D table.

“What’s wrong!?” Mike shouted, frustrated that everyone was freaking out about something that was wrong with Eleven that he couldn’t see.

“Ew, ew, ew, ew, ew, ew, ew,” Lucas chanted as the three boys ran up the stairs in terror.

Max rolled her eyes at Lucas’ immaturity.

“Eleven,” Max began, addressing the shorter girl in front of her. Eleven still wasn’t a fan of Max and refused to speak to her. She wouldn’t turn around to speak to Max which frustrated the redhead. “God, I’m trying to help you out here!”

Eleven flinched at Max’s raised voice, prompting Mike to pull her into his arms and glare over her head at Max.

“What is your problem?”

“Shut up, Wheeler. Eleven, I want to help you,” Max began. “Um,

have you had,” she cleared her throat embarrassedly. “Have you had your period before?”

Mike’s brain suddenly imploded, his face turning cherry red as he spluttered at Max.

“Why would you – what – I mean-”

“I said shut up, Wheeler. If you’re going to be an idiot you can go join your dumbass friends upstairs.”

“No!” Eleven cried, her arms tightening their hold on Mike, his decision made for him.

He shook his head. “No, I’m not going anywhere.”

“Fine, but then you need to be helpful, not stupid!”

Mike glared at Max silently, but she refused to back down. As much as this mysterious girl didn’t like Max, she needed Max’s help, god knows what the boys would have done without her. Mike let out a long sigh.

“El, we need to speak to Max. I promise I won’t go anywhere, but she wants to help you.”

Mike’s quiet coaxing eventually worked and Eleven turned to look at Max expectantly.

“What is period?”

“Um, well,” Max began, as Mike’s face turned a darker red, if that was possible. “It happens to girls when they go through puberty. It means that their body is now able to have babies.”

“Babies?” Eleven asked excitedly causing Max to laugh and Mike to gulp nervously.

“Yeah, but only when you’re like old. Like parent age old.”

Eleven looked down sadly.

“So, when your body is able to have babies, every month it goes through a cycle. The time when it is waiting to see if a baby is going to come and then if there is no baby it takes a break for a week and you bleed a bit.”

Max was trying her best to explain this without having a full-on sex talk with Eleven, but she could see that Eleven wasn't full comprehending and wanted more details. Mike looked like he wanted the ground to swallow him whole. He was shuffling his feet, his hands deep in his pockets and his eyes on the ground.

“Blood?” Eleven whimpered, knowing that blood typically meant pain unless it was the result of a super powers-induced nosebleed.

“No, it's okay,” Max jumps in worriedly as Mike finally looks up at Eleven's panicked demeanour. “It doesn't hurt. Well... not really. Just some cramps. That's why your stomach hurt earlier. Those were period cramps.”

Mike looked back at his shoes embarrassedly. Eleven, however, nodded understanding the very vague and basic health lesson that Max was giving her.

“So, it's not a big deal, but you have some blood on your pants. That's why the boys freaked out and ran away.”

“I'm gross?” Eleven asked quietly, remembering Lucas' chant of ‘ew's and the look of horror on the boys' faces.

“No, El. You could never be gross,” Mike chimed in, taking Eleven's hand gently. “It's not your fault.”

“But, Dustin was yelling.” Eleven reminded him. “Lucas said ‘ew!’”

“They're just being idiots, Eleven. Ignore them.” Max told her with a smile that Eleven tentatively returned. “I'll be right back. I'm just going to grab my bag.”

Eleven walked towards the mirror to inspect the ugly stain on her new acid wash jeans that Joyce had gifted her with for Christmas. She looked at it sadly.

“Stupid!”

“No, El, don’t worry. I’m sure my mom or Nancy will know what to do. We’ll ask them to wash it don’t worry.” Mike told her placing a hand on her shoulder.

Eleven then noticed a small spot of blood that had gotten on Mike’s pants as well.

“No!” she cried, “I’m sorry, Mike!”

Mike stared at Eleven confusedly before he noticed the small stain on his pants as well. He flushed hotly.

“It’s okay, El. I’m not mad.” He told her, gulping down his embarrassment.

It was then that Max came running back down the stairs with her backpack.

“Okay, so I’ve got some pads. Want me to show you how to use them, Eleven?”

Mike choked on his own saliva, unable to handle how embarrassed he currently felt. Max rolled her eyes at him.

“Wheeler, why don’t you go and grab El something to wear from Nancy, you idiot.”

Mike nodded and tried to extract his hand from Eleven’s grip.

“Mike, no!” Eleven whined.

“El,” Mike smiled, taking her cheeks in his hands. “I’ll be right back. Max will help you and then I’ll be back. Here,” he picked up her wrist setting a 5-minute timer on the watch Dustin had got her for Christmas. “When your watch beeps I’ll be back, okay?”

“Promise?”

“I promise,” Mike laughed, giving her fingers a squeeze then taking off up the stairs.

Max let out a laugh and shook her head before pulling out the pads in the bottom of her backpack.

“You’ve got Wheeler wrapped around your finger.”

“What?”

“It’s a saying. Like he’ll do anything you want him to,” Max explained as she ushered the girl into the basement bathroom and began demonstrating how to expose the adhesive on the back of the pad.

“Yes, we’re friends.” Eleven reminded Max. “Friends would do anything for you.”

“Yeah, but you and Mike aren’t just friends though, are you?”

Eleven blushed, understanding what Max meant.

The girls had finished up in the washroom and were waiting on the couch for Mike. They could hear the boys at the top of the stairs arguing in harsh whispers. Suddenly there was a knock on the basement door.

“El? Can I come down?”

“Yes, Mike!”

Mike descended the stairs with a pair of thick grey sweatpants that Eleven recognized as belonging to Mike and a bottle that she was unsure about.

“Here,” he smiled, handing her the sweatpants and placing a soft kiss on her cheek.

“Thank you, Mike.”

Eleven went to change and when she emerged from the bathroom, the bottom of Mike's pants pooling around her feet, Mike pressed two little pills from the bottle he was holding into Eleven's hands.

“No,” she whimpered. These were the same as what Papa gave her. They made her tired and forgetful. Then they would hurt her.



“Why? They’ll help your-” Mike cleared his throat embarrassedly. “-your cramps.”

“Papa...”

“Oh, El. I’m sorry. I promise these won’t be bad. They’ll help you.”

Eleven nodded, trusting Mike. He had never lied to her before. Mike smiled at her before holding his hand out to take the pair of jeans Eleven was holding.

“My mom will wash them. She’s washing my pants right now as well.”

Mike took off up the stairs with Eleven’s jeans. He returned minutes later with the three other boys following him down the stairs.

The boys all looked at Eleven with ashamed faces, sitting around the basement silently while Mike took Eleven into his lap on the couch next to Max.

“We’re sorry, Eleven.” Will apologized first. Lucas repeated the same sentiment and Dustin nodded along.

“That’s okay,” Eleven mumbled, a small smile on her face.

“No, it’s not. We were some grade A shitheads and we want you to know it’ll never happen again.” Dustin pressed. “Like if you ever need anything: pads, chocolate, tamp-”

“Shut up, Dustin!” Mike exclaimed and the whole group laughed at Dustin taking it too far, as usual.

They decided to watch another movie, allowing Eleven to choose the movie this time. The group had settled down and were watching Tom Cruise in Risky Business as Mike began to slowly rub soothing circles into Eleven’s abdomen. He was quite embarrassed while doing it but knew it always helped him when he had a sore stomach, so he continued his tummy massage. Mike grinned, pleased with himself, when Eleven let out a little sigh and snuggled into Mike’s chest.